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ABSTRACT

This document contains the viewpoints of five providers of education and training of adults at British institutions on the subject of which indicators should be used to measure the quality of performance. According to the representative of the Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education (Powell), measures applied to adult education have tended to concentrate on economy and efficiency, but because these measures are based on the concept of full-time students and courses, they have become outmoded. If performance indicators are not to distort institutional objectives, they must reflect the value of the education and training provided as understood by learners, teachers, and those who pay for the education--individuals, employers, or the community at large. The REPLAN perspective (Buffton) is that enrollment is a key area in assessing a college's effectiveness in meeting the needs of the community. According to Buffton, colleges' mission statements (which should include statements about access, equity, and entitlement) can be translated into measurable achievements. A map for the development of performance indicators is provided. The view from an unnamed institute (Gibson) is that performance indicators should give a clear profile of strengths and weaknesses in organization (including cost and resource monitoring) and quality of service. A description of adult education in West Sussex (Holliday, Harris) shows that adult education is delivered through 3 colleges of further education and 16 community schools and colleges whose staff agreed on performance indicators that may be summarized as inputs, processes, and outputs. Finally, an urban perspective, supplied by Wilson, explains that the Manchester local education authority uses both quantitative and qualitative measures of performance. (CML)

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PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

in the Education and Training of Adults

June 1990

In recent years consensus has begun to emerge between managers of education services and those who deliver them that accountability for such services should involve the definition of sensitive measures of performance which must be both qualitative and quantitative. Most recognise the inadequacy of traditional methods such as staff:student ratios (SSRs) to achieve such measurement. So when the Audit Commission evaluated the performance of further education (FE) generally (Obtaining Better Value from Further Education *HMSO, 1985) against very little more than simple measures of* ***efficiency,*** *a fierce debate began. The Joint Study of Efficiency (JES) (DES/Local Authority Associations), leading to the publication of* Managing Colleges Efficiently *(HMSO, 1987), carried the argument part of the way into the educationalists' camp by making an initial attempt to progress measures of effectiveness to modify the blunt measures of the Audit Commission, which were rooted in a version of FE consisting largely of full-time students on examination courses. The JES's indicators of* ***effectiveness*** *included:*

- *SSRs based on full-time equivalent (fte) enrolled student and academic staff numbers;*
- *non-teacher cost per enrolled fte student;*
- *cost per fte student enrolled on a course;*
- *completion rates for students enrolled on courses, and the cost per fte student completing a course;*
- *rates of target qualifications gained for students enrolled on a course, and the cost per qualified fte student;*
- *rates of employment or progression to further and higher education for students completing appropriate courses.*

Indicators of efficiency suggested were:

- *SSRs;*
- *unit costs linked to appropriate output indicators;*
- *non-teacher cost per enrolled fte;*
- *systems for monitoring space utilisation.*

A number of agencies have further modified the JES approach by introducing client perceptions and by exploring the purpose of quality measurement and its potential positive contribution to good management at all levels.

Significant additional work has been done by the Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education (UDACE) (see below), and the Further Education Unit (FEU) has published Towards an Educational Audit *(1989). This offers an Educational Audit Reference Inventory, a working document to assist in the creation of reliable audit instruments. This added* ***responsiveness*** *and* ***standing*** *to more obvious measures of efficiency such as SSRs, unit costs and progression of students.*

As measures become more sensitive and reflective of the variety of provision and the widely differing needs that are being met, concerns of educationalists about a proper definition of quality may be fewer. It is nevertheless necessary, in a changing service, to guard against the kind of complacency which might be shown by the ossification of performance indicators in spite of service changes. In addition, requirements for strategic planning by LEAs and local control of finance may themselves raise concerns, particularly for providers of the education and training of adults (ETA). Some providers of ETA services will be included in schemes of delegation, but there is a danger that the special conditions required for quality delivery of such services will be overlooked.

This bulletin was commissioned as an attempt to gauge feelings among providers of ETA about performance indicators applied to their service. It shows from a number of viewpoints that concerns remain about applying criteria generated for FE to ETA. In addition, the huge variety of content, length and mode of study in ETA can lead to problems in knowing which data to collect and how to use it. Certainly the key importance of the student view in ETA makes assessment of student perception an essential part of quality control in this area.

The views expressed in the following articles are those of the authors and, though some joint agreement has been reached and some rewriting and editing has been done, the sum of the views merely represents a service in transition and is intended to provoke response and debate. We will return to this debate in future work. We urge those who wish to take part in this debate, which should take place now as new systems are being put into action, to contact FEU, 2 Orange Street, London WC2H 7WE (071-321 0433).

Martin Johnson
Principal Officer, FEU

CE 055585

THE UDACE VIEWPOINT

Measures applied to post-16 education and training to date have tended to concentrate on economy — how much is being spent — or on efficiency — what is the relationship between inputs (expressed in terms of resources and staff numbers) and outputs (usually expressed in terms of student attendance patterns and examination performance). Efficiency ratios of the sort now required under JES are based on the concept of full-time students and courses. This is an increasingly outmoded concept.

At a time when demographic trends and socio-economic imperatives are making the FE client group an increasingly adult population, and when those adult learners are increasingly seeking units or modules of learning rather than traditional courses, performance indicators of the sort currently applied seem insufficient to measure the system appropriately. Moreover, the implicit assumption behind JES effectiveness indicators (progression and qualification rates) is not relevant to those whose purpose in following a learning programme is neither to gain a qualification nor to progress to further study or employment. Universal adherence to JES indicators will fail to take account of the underlying purpose of much ETA.

Measures of efficiency are of use to institutional and LEA managers, and will in particular assist in resource allocation. However, if performance indicators are not to distort institutional objectives, they must reflect the value of the education and training provided as understood by learners, teachers and those who pay for provision, whether individuals, employers or the community at large.

JES itself recognised that 'if a system is not effective — or has not defined its objectives — indicators of efficiency are of limited value ... Efficiency should not be considered in isolation but in conjunction with effectiveness, and ... when assessing efficiency the outputs should be defined to reflect the purposes set for, and the results of, the educational process'. The relationship between intention and output lies at the heart of the REPLAN-funded work at Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology (GlosCAT) reported elsewhere in this bulletin. Other initiatives — notably the Training Agency funded Responsive College Programme and the FEU project which produced *Towards an Educational Audit* — have focused attention on the need to measure the effectiveness of the system by analysing the perceptions of clients/customers of the provision made, or by identifying situations which fail to meet standards and subsequently require investigation of the causes of poor performance and initiating necessary restorative action. UDACE welcomes this move away from a strict concentration on institutional efficiency.

Approaches designed to assess institutional effectiveness such as those outlined above use performance indicators in their true sense, as ***indicators***, and use the data produced as a developmental tool rather than as a measuring stick. The process involves collecting, sorting, analysing and reporting data, often at course tutor level ('quality control'); setting standards of what level of performance would be acceptable; and co-ordinating control mechanisms, checking on their data effectiveness and initiating action in response to data which revealed an unsatisfactory situation ('quality assurance'). Recent Training Agency funded work seeks to examine the 'strategic quality management' necessary to develop a climate in which this pursuit of quality can be successful.

A number of serious practical difficulties arise when an approach of the sort described is applied to the education and training of adults. The sheer size of the adult learning population — including adults in FE colleges, adult education centres, community schools and colleges, and those undergoing training on short courses and in the workplace — makes the collection of data a formidable task. This is compounded by the diversity of learners' objectives and personal circumstances. It's one thing to collect data on the full-time students in an FE college: quite another to take into account the many thousands of adults participating, on a discontinuous, part-time basis, in all aspects of a Local Authority's post-16 provision. Moreover, much adult education and training is delivered by part-time staff. The costs of extending contracts to include aspects of data collection, analysis and reporting, or employing staff specifically to these roles, can be prohibitive. It is perhaps significant that little pilot work has been extended to the part-time/adult sector.

There is also, perhaps, a more philosophical concern. Any assessment of effectiveness (or, for that matter, efficiency) will involve a comparison between performance and a previously set target: this is, indeed, the very heart of a 'performance indicator'. Unless the standards are agreed between all parties who have a genuine interest in the learning programme under investigation — and this will include learners and 'customers' as well as providers — then the value system against which performance is measured will be biased. There is little evidence to suggest that current approaches to performance measures take into account the views of all who have a legitimate interest in the service being provided.

Performance indicators will increasingly be a driving force for change, and, since they are the basis for allocating resources, their impact is inevitably political as well as administrative. A number of LEAs now echo, in different ways, UDACE's concern that the education and training of adults should be measured in terms relevant to the purposes of the service, including such factors as personal

development, learner autonomy and equity. UDACE has been considering these issues, and has begun a development project to examine and analyse the range of performance indicators currently in use in post-16 education and training to see if they are relevant and valid when applied to all parts of that provision. We intended, as a result of this exercise, to assemble a 'toolkit' of assessment techniques and measures which can demonstrate the effectiveness of institutions and other providers in their delivery of education and training for adults. A full-time project officer has been appointed and field work begun. The Unit has prepared an initial commentary on approaches adopted to date (*Performance Indicators and the Education of Adults*, 1990, available from NIACE publications, price £2.00) and intends to issue occasional papers commenting on issues observed during the life of the Performance Indicators Project.

At the same time, we have noted the JES's statement that 'certain educational results, such as social or personal development, and contributory factors, such as the abilities and motivations of students at the start of the course, cannot easily be quantified'. It may not be an easy task, but UDACE believes that it is possible to develop techniques for the better description and measurement of the outcomes of learning. Without such techniques it is impossible to develop a set of performance indicators which can be applied across all forms of education and training for adults. An analysis of 'value added' — the difference in students before and after a learning programme — with attendant emphasis on the assessment of individual achievement can provide an indicator of the quality of the learning undertaken, and is the only rational basis for the assessment of effectiveness.

These observations have led us to mount a further project, with funding from the Training Agency, to look at the development of learning outcomes and credits. The focus of this project is in higher education, but parallel work is currently in hand on a small scale with two Midlands-based LEA Community Education services. It is hoped that this work will inform the Performance Indicators Project. UDACE is publishing a series of linked papers on competence, outcomes and performance indicators in the education and training of adults: these titles should all be available during 1990. We will also be disseminating our ideas though a programme of seminars related to each publication.

Further information on UDACE's work on performance indicators is available from Bob Powell, and on our work in the field of learning outcomes from Sue Otter. Both can be contacted at UDACE, 94B London Road, Leicester LE2 0QS (tel: 0533 542645).

Bob Powell

A REPLAN PERSPECTIVE

REPLAN, with its remit to improve education and training opportunities for unwaged adults and its focus on the individual learner, is concerned to contribute to the debate on the development of performance indicators. A reading of the JES report, *Managing Colleges Efficiently*, underlines the need to begin to establish appropriate indicators of performance, particularly when examining FE's work with non-traditional adult learners.

The commissioning, by NIACE/REPLAN in 1988, of research into the assessment of performance indicators relevant to educational work with unwaged adults (*Completion Rates and Other Performance Indicators in Educational Opportunities for Unwaged Adults* Anna Dekker and Richard Whitfield, NIACE, 1989) has provided useful and important ideas. The conclusions are that performance indicators need to be a valid reflection of the educational process and the indicators outlined in the JES report are too narrowly conceived and form only part of a proper picture of institutional evaluation.

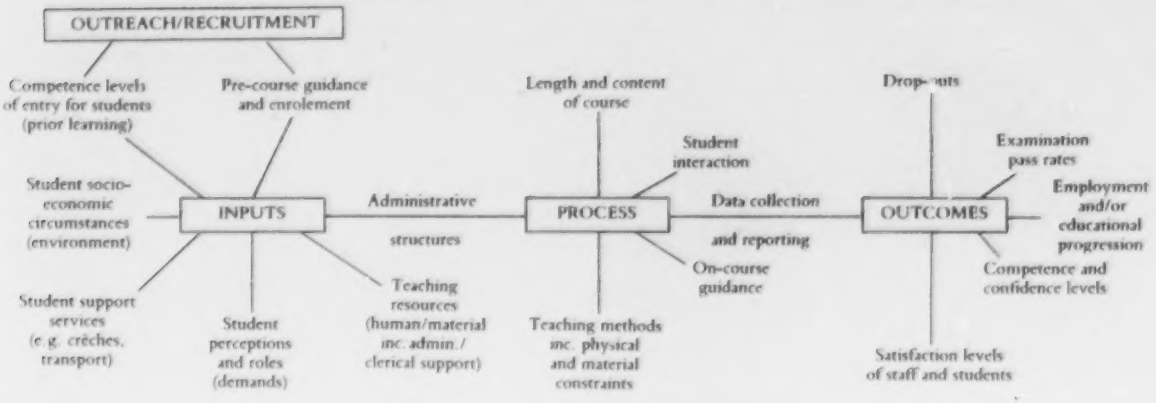
A map for the development of educational performance indicators which gives equal weight to inputs, process and outcomes is suggested (see below). NIACE/REPLAN views this as providing a good model for the development of more specific performance indicators and is funding work in the North West on transferability to community education of the indicators outlined. Building on this work, NIACE/REPLAN has further comments under the headings of 'enrolment', 'resource management' and 'success'. These are the areas that relate to strategic planning under the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) and will presumably provide a basis for the development of performance indicators.

Enrolment

This is a key area in assessing a college's effectiveness in meeting the needs of the community. Colleges' mission statements, by which they will be judged, need to include statements and commitments about access, equity and entitlement. These can be translated into measurable achievements which, in effect, become guarantees against which the college agrees to deliver a certain range and kind of service. To demonstrate a commitment to meeting the needs of the whole community, a college must show the composition (age, gender, socio-economic grouping, etc.) of its catchment area. This information has to be set against the composition of its current student body and targets set in order to increase the number of under-represented learners.

The need for year-round enrolment and a stop/start pattern of study has to be recognised. Enrolment targets based on a September input will not necessarily reflect the performance of a good, open-access all-year-round provision college.

A map for the development of educational performance indicators



Guidance services available at enrolment can increase the effectiveness of the institution's most important output — a student who has had a successful, positive and life-enriching educational experience. Related to this is the need to provide a flexible, appropriate, negotiated curriculum which allows for effective choice by both actual and potential students. Mechanisms for carrying out negotiated needs analysis are one of the standards against which a college could be judged.

REPLAN would also suggest that performance indicators need to be seen in relationship to those which Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) will be developing, given the contribution TECs are likely to make to the provision for unemployed and unwaged adults. Compatibility with TVEI/ Employment Training and other Training Agency performance indicators would also be desirable.

Resource management

If unwaged adults have an initial satisfactory experience of education and training, they are likely to see further opportunities positively and therefore are potential fee-generators. Resource managers need to take a long-term view.

Class sizes may need to be smaller to encourage non-participating adults into colleges and to provide appropriate tutorial support. This can affect SSRs in the short term, but has a contribution to make to the overall performance of a college.

Assessment and accreditation, particularly of prior learning, can be costly as it often involves one-to-one work, but it needs to be seen as a long-term investment — initially costly but providing the adult student with increased confidence and the desire and motivation for future education and training.

Programme weightings and other indicators of cost should take into account support for adult students, for example guidance and crèche facilities. Lack of such provision will significantly affect other performance indicators such as completion rates.

Effectiveness

The definition of an effective college has to be related to student experiences and achievements. From REPLAN's point of view this means examining the experience and achievements of individual adult learners and accepting that:

- a range of outputs is likely — from jobs to a measurable increase in confidence, to a positive view of education and training;
- individual students' objectives are the starting-point and have to be recorded and measured in terms of whether the college has facilitated their achievement;
- individuals' objectives will change and may need to change because of the educational process itself;
- quantitative measures need to be devised to assess this process;
- expectations of staff and students about possible achievements might be different;
- follow-up studies of students and their achievements are needed and these have to be longitudinal to assess the outcomes of the educational process;
- an analysis of repeat enrolment needs to be undertaken regularly in order to identify whether target groups are being reached.

Much of REPLAN's work has been concerned with changing traditional provision to meet the needs of unwaged adults. These attempts at widening access through producing a more flexible response from colleges will be threatened if indicators of institutional performance do not take into account the backgrounds, expectations, educational support needs, likely attendance patterns and achievements of particular client groups. We would therefore argue that further work urgently needs to be undertaken to develop these points into appropriate, efficient and effective indicators.

Jacqui Buffton

A VIEW FROM AN ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTE

Performance indicators for any organisation should give a clear profile of strengths and weaknesses. These will be in two areas:

- ***organisation,*** including cost and resource monitoring (efficiency);
- ***quality*** of service (effectiveness).

Most of the performance indicators suggested for FE to date are in the area of cost and resource monitoring. Inevitably, comparisons will be made between institutions to identify those which operate most efficiently, but the number of completions/students/student hours, etc. will not indicate the relative value of a course of study to the individual or to the community. In the absence of reliable indicators of value the danger is that efficiency will be used as the main criterion for success.

While not underestimating the importance of these indicators of efficiency, a shift in the focus, clearly separating organisational from educational evaluation, would give a more balanced indication of value. This analysis of value requires more sophisticated ratios which cannot operate discretely, but which must balance input against output as well as taking account of external factors.

The analysis of value

Clearly there are problems of both definition and measurement in any evaluation of quality. An appropriate definition of quality for the purpose of evaluation in FEA would be 'fitness for purpose'. Consequently the purpose, or mission, must be clearly stated.

Adult Education's mission statement should reflect its existing strengths. These may vary between authorities but will include some or all of the following:

- the ability to attract those students who have benefited least from statutory education, and to enable them to progress to further study or personal development;
- the ability to provide competence-based, 'roll-on, roll-off' training in some subjects;
- the flexibility to meet educational needs on a local basis;
- the ability to respond rapidly to changing needs of the local community;
- provision of a flexible pattern of study which will fit in with personal circumstances.

Having agreed the purpose, key areas should be identified which will indicate the extent to which the institution is achieving its stated purpose. For instance, a possible indicator of the first of these might be the drop-out rate of new students who have no previous academic qualifications. This will not give the whole picture but will indicate whether or not we are meeting the needs of this group. Indicators would need to be sophisticated enough to include a possible positive view of drop-out: the student has achieved his/her objective even though the course has not been completed.

Data for such evaluation are not difficult to collect and may be available from other sources such as staff appraisal, but do need careful co-ordination. With a committed staff group, keen to evaluate the success of individual programmes, there is a real danger of data overload and a reluctance on the part of students and part-time staff to fill in subsequent data collection forms. Information on proposed data collection and use should be clearly stated. Some national agreement on key performance indicators for adult education would enable institutes to monitor and compare their work using a minimum of data.

Monitoring in practice

At South Greenwich Institute monitoring is undertaken on a regular basis in order to assess to what extent aims are being met, and also, with the demise of ILEA, to establish a base of information to help us to respond to the many enquiries and reviews. In order to keep the operation manageable, data are collected partly through a survey of all classes and partly by a 10% sample of students. This is done on an area basis and is categorised mainly into input and output, with some additional survey information and anecdotal evidence about student perceptions of the process of education. Each area also has local information on, for example, unemployment, ages, ethnicity. This is being compiled to give a profile of the population of the area served by the Institute.

Data currently available include:

- ***Inputs***
  Number of students who:
  - are new to their class this year
  - are new to post-school education
  - have no academic qualifications
  - are female
  - have special educational needs
  - are from ethnic minority groups
- ***Outputs***
  Number of students who:
  - are planning to progress to other work/study as a direct result of attending the class
  - will use their new skills in their work
  - feel the course has fulfilled expectations
  - have dropped out from each class.

Using the data

These statistics provide the raw material for performance indicators, giving some indication of success relative to previous years or other institutes, but need qualifying if they are to be turned into useful information. Evidence of staff and student perceptions is useful in evaluating the process. However, it is the statistical relationship between inputs, outputs and the area profile which gives the simplest indication of the effectiveness of the process, although for a more complete picture this needs to be seen in conjunction with soft data such as student perceptions. Performance indicators need to be ratios which take account of these factors. For instance:

- number of new students with no previous qualifications who progress to further study/work, as a proportion of unqualified/unemployed shown in area profile;
- enrolment by ethnic group as a proportion of ethnic minorities in area profile;
- number of women who are attending classes not traditionally associated with their gender;
- proportion of students who drop out for reasons attributable to the institution. (This would necessitate follow up of all drop-outs and clear guidelines on 'attributable reasons' such as timing and crèche support as well as quality of teaching.)

These are more complex than the ratios suggested in *Managing Colleges Efficiently* but will more accurately reflect effectiveness. There must always be cost per student calculations but these need to be supported by more sensitive indicators of value. Together these may meet the needs of both the educator and the accountant by indicating value for money.

These are not suggested as definitive answers, but as a starting-point for the development of ratios which can be used as comparative indicators of performance. If the various professional bodies are to contribute then it should be by concentrating on the analysis of value in the different sectors of FE, acknowledging the diversity of Adult Education, and ensuring that some attention is given to what is, in terms of student numbers, the largest of the post-school education sectors. Adult Education should not be seen as an afterthought to Further Education, but as a distinct and valuable part of the education service with particular experience in attracting and meeting the needs of the mature returner, and, given the changing demography, with an increasingly important contribution to make.

Pam Gibson
ex-ILEA,
now Area-Principal
North Kent Adult Education

A COUNTY LEA

In West Sussex, Adult Education is delivered through three colleges of further education and sixteen community schools/colleges. In order to develop a comprehensive monitoring scheme for Adult Education it was considered necessary to devise performance indicators appropriate both to the management systems and administrative resources of schools and colleges.

In community schools Adult Education is an integral part of a wider philosophy of community education. In terms of effectiveness, an emphasis on completion rates, qualifications and progression does not fully reflect the aims of the community education service because of the diverse nature of adult education provision, particularly within non-formal and informal areas of work. For these reasons it was decided to consult professional staff regarding criteria which they considered should be taken into account in the design of performance indicators. An initial approach was made to all adult education organisers by the Adult Education Adviser as part of the regular system of advisory interviews.

This exercise was followed by a two-day residential conference for all community education staff, including adult education organisers in further education colleges. From the conference emerged a measure of consensus that performance indicators could be used on a number of different planes. In considering value for money, economy, efficiency and effectiveness were basic concepts. However, it was generally considered that equality and excellence were also of critical importance.

There was also discussion about how the impact of educational experiences on clients could be monitored and the appropriate performance indicators that were required. The importance of setting objectives against which performance could be assessed was debated and three approaches emerged:

- setting objectives centrally in terms of measurable targets;
- setting objectives in terms of client valuation of the service;
- setting objectives in qualitative terms.

The conference raised a number of issues without coming to any firm conclusions. However, it proved to be a valuable occasion as it provided an opportunity for key staff in the service to articulate their views about the kind of performance indicators to be used in future.

The outcome of the Adviser's interviews and the conference showed a considerable range of factors which staff considered important. These can be

divided roughly into items of inputs, processes and outputs. Although this is a crude and subjective list of headings, it provides some basic data from which to engage in a dialogue with staff. It is recognised that data collection upon which to base performance indicators can be extremely time-consuming and costly. The headings below include information which is already collected in certain forms, while others require further work. Data could also be collected at different points within the service, at institution, area and LEA levels.

- *Inputs*
  - student hours
  - teaching hours
  - number of outreach courses in rural areas
  - percentage of population involved in courses
  - use of facilities
  - modes of attendance, day/evening/weekend
  - courses advertised/cancelled
  - location of courses
  - teacher profile
  - support facilities for students

- *Processes*
  - numbers of students returning to further courses
  - financial solvency under net budgeting
  - curriculum diversity
  - involvement of school staff in community education
  - assessment of needs
  - environment of centre conducive to adults
  - publicity and marketing material
  - supervision of teaching quality
  - community participation in decision making
  - links with voluntary and professional agencies
  - how students' progress is monitored

- *Outputs*
  - student achievement of goals
  - teacher evaluation of objectives
  - teachers wanting to work again
  - management committee involvement
  - affiliated groups and societies formed from courses
  - letters of praise/complaint
  - additional courses added to programme
  - expressed student value of education experience

Conclusion

This represents an initial approach to the difficulties inherent in trying to devise output criteria for adult education. No claims are made that it breaks new ground but it illustrates the approach of one LEA to the issue.

Colin Holliday
Neil Harris

Performance indicators

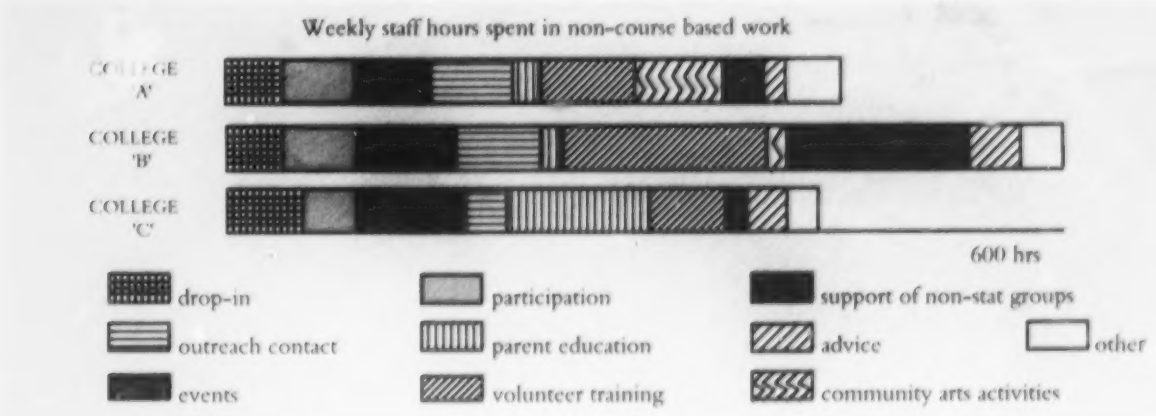
Manchester LEA has four major colleges, three with departments of community education which cover adult education and the youth service. All four colleges attract large numbers of adults. Along with the colleges, community education is therefore included within Manchester's scheme of delegation. Arrangements detailed within the scheme restate Manchester's commitment to community education, and give weighting to areas of work such as adult basic education, special needs and off-site adult education. However, there is still concern among adult educators that formula funding will disadvantage areas of work with adults, particularly non-course-based, pre-access areas, because they are not recorded in the same way. It is relatively easy to register students for a class and count the number of hours they attend. It is much more difficult to find a way of recording the work of an outreach tutor which may, for example, over a long period, result in a group of women with no positive experiences of education joining an access course, or making a video, or setting up a co-operative.

Formula funding

The formula developed under schemes of delegation will fund against target student numbers. Manchester's scheme recognises that monitoring and evaluation should include factors other than student numbers and costs. However, the only specific measures given are students' involvement by programme area and equality perspectives, financial data and staffing establishments. The statement of procedures says that monitoring arrangements will reflect the need to ensure the economy, efficiency, equity, quality and effectiveness of provision. It also states that the authority will take a wide range of factors into account in planning provision. However, the monitoring is at present based on work-related FE monitoring which is primarily SSRs, retention rates and qualification rates. These have some relevance to the education of adults but do not give a total picture. They have a value particularly in relation to course-based activity, but assume standard, model students whose domestic circumstances allow them to start, proceed and finish on a tidy timetable. They fail to allow for initial inequality in such things as experience or support. They also fail to take account of non-course-based work such as outreach, drop in and support for voluntary groups.

Measuring non-course-based work

In association with the preparation of a scheme of delegation, the LEA convened working groups to develop three-year strategic plans. One looked at Adult Education and highlighted the need to develop performance indicators for non-course-based work. An attempt was made to measure the work in terms



of staff hours spent on different types of activity. The table above details the activities considered and the approximate staff hours. The amount of time allocated is substantial, and the proportions of different activities in colleges varies tremendously.

A city-wide group is working on developing performance indicators primarily for non-course-based work. Nationally and locally much work has been done on performance indicators. Some acknowledges the need to assess consumer satisfaction and to recognise the contribution made by outreach, educational guidance and the provision of drop-in and non-formal activities both to meeting needs of the relevant communities and to positive outcomes for individual students. There is still a need to explore measures of student progress and satisfaction.

The approach

It was decided to pursue two approaches: quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative

This involves looking at ways of measuring and recording non-course-based work to ensure that it is visible and therefore funded. It is being done via a REPLAN minor project. A group of fieldworkers in each college meet, develop indicators, pilot them for one month and evaluate the process.

A performing arts group in one college will decide a way of measuring the work in planning and monitoring a community performance and its outcome. This could entail records of involvement in planning meetings, recording the personal goals of those involved, some notion of the student hours in total, and a follow-up of participants. Experience suggests that many unemployed participants subsequently gain employment.

Another group will be looking at outreach work with voluntary groups. Some work has already been done on the development of outreach diaries, but more discussion is needed on their content and organisation. This approach can ensure that the implementation of mission statements and development plans relating to target groups in the community can be monitored.

Qualitative

This is concerned with developing a programme of evaluation training for staff to complement the quantitative approach. This will eventually encompass all the activities provided by community education departments, but initially will be a small-scale pilot. A consultant is being used to develop clear objectives, a framework for training and a rolling programme. The aim is that groups of staff will be trained in evaluation and develop measures of quality for their area of work.

Both approaches are linked back to the monitoring needed for the scheme of delegation and to each other through the city-wide steering group.

Issues

The differing perspectives of staff in different areas have had to be taken into account in devising the approach, and will have to be kept very much at the forefront in implementation.

Elected members, officers and senior managers are concerned with implementing ERA, developing good management information systems, monitoring effective use of resources. They are also concerned with quality of provision, meeting community needs and implementing council policies. Tutors and outreach workers are concerned with adequate resourcing, good information, being involved in maintaining and developing their work, gaining recognition of and credit for their work, meeting local needs, implementing council policy and providing a quality service.

It will be important for there to be agreement at all levels that the aim of the exercise is to make work visible, not to remove it, and to support quality.

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